

# First Aid





# What is First Aid?

First aid is the immediate assistance given to someone who is hurt or suddenly becomes ill. It is intended to help the person only until medical aid can be provided.

First aid does not take the place of a doctor's treatment but it can help save lives and prevent further injury.

The basic objectives of first aid are:

- 1) To preserve life
- 2) To minimize the effects of injury
- 3) To relieve pain and suffering

## Examine the Victim Quickly Using the Following Step-by-Step Procedure:

- 1) Check to make sure the victim is breathing and has a pulse.
- 2) Locate all wounds and stop all bleeding.
- 3) Check for lumps on the head.
- 4) If the victim is conscious, ask him where it hurts and what happened.
- 5) See if he can raise his head and move his neck - if not, do not move him.
- 6) If his head, neck and spine are okay, check his arms and legs.
- 7) If conscious, have the victim take a deep breath and cough to determine whether he has chest injuries.
- 8) Check for internal injuries by asking him to pull in his stomach and let it out again.
- 9) Check for spinal injuries by running your hand firmly down his back to detect tenderness or pain.

## General Procedures

If a person appears seriously injured, don't try to move him. If you don't know exactly what the injury is, keep the victim lying down with his head level. Don't allow him to move around.

Fear, anxiety and sometimes panic are often the reactions of those involved in emergencies. If you act frightened or upset, you will make the victim even more excited and afraid.

Be calm. When examining and treating an injured or ill person, do what needs to be done carefully, efficiently and quickly. Be as soothing and cheerful as you can. This attitude will calm the person who is hurt or sick and make him feel he is being well taken care of until the doctor comes.

If an accident occurs where there is danger of further harm coming to the injured person from exposure to severe weather, falling rocks or trees, fire or other dangerous conditions, then the patient must be moved to a safe place. Utilize the collar drag method whereby you grab the shirt/jacket collar of the victim and use it to drag him out of harm's way. Be careful not to put yourself in danger while trying to help.



# Artificial Respiration

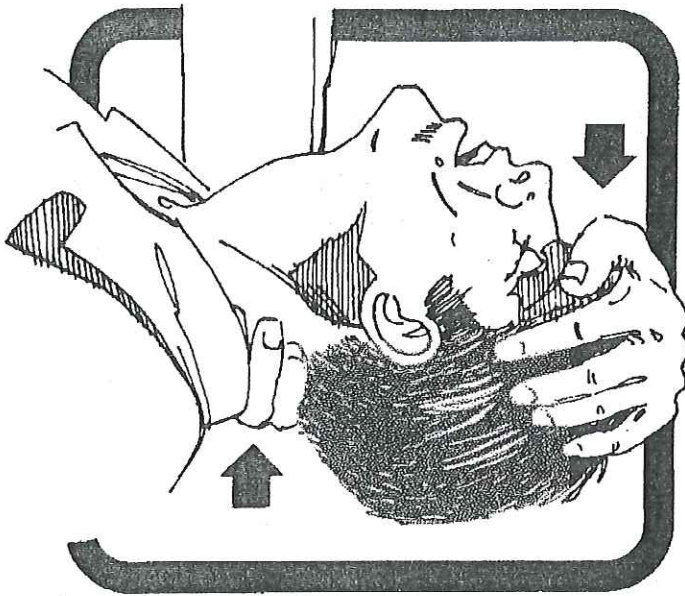
## Clear the Air Passage

If the air passage to the lungs is blocked, two things could happen. The victim may become unconscious and he may stop breathing.

Blood, vomit or saliva in the mouth may block the back of the throat and prevent air from passing to the lungs. Sometimes an unconscious person's tongue will partially block off and limit the amount of air which can reach his lungs.

It is vital to get air moving in and out of the lungs at once. Tilt the victim's head back as far as possible. Pull his jaw upward and forward into a jutting-out position. If you can see anything in the victim's mouth that may obstruct the air passage, clear it out with your fingers.

If a fractured neck is suspected, do not force the person's head back. Instead, hook your thumb over his lower teeth



and grasp his chin with the fingers of the same hand. Lift the chin upward, open his mouth and remove any visible obstruction.

If he does not start to breathe immediately, apply artificial respiration using the following method:

## Mouth-to-Mouth Method

1. Clear the air passage.
2. Open your mouth wide and take a deep breath.
3. Pinch his nostrils closed with your fingers. Place your mouth over the victim's mouth forming a tight seal and give two slow breaths (if the mouth is injured or will not open, you may use the nostrils). You will know when

your breath enters the victim by the gentle rise and fall of the chest.

4. Take your mouth away, and check for a pulse.



5. If the adult victim has a pulse but is still not breathing, continue to give one breath approximately every 5 seconds. When giving mouth-to-mouth respiration to a small child, place your mouth over both his nose and mouth while blowing approximately every 3 seconds.
6. Check the pulse of the victim every minute to make sure the heart is still beating.





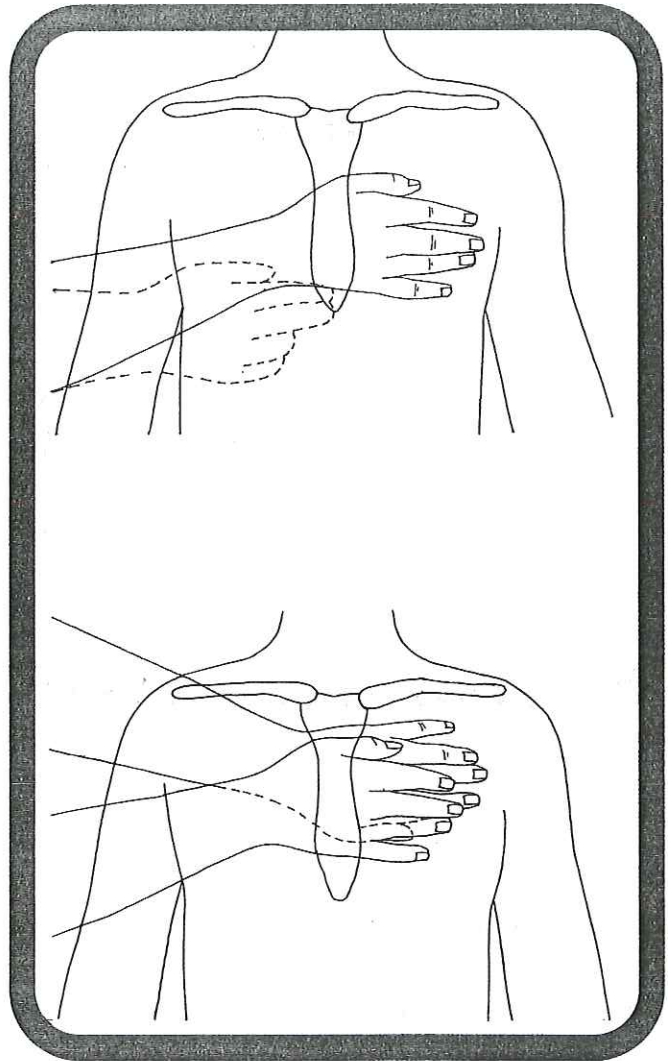
## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

If the victim is not breathing and has no pulse, then CPR is necessary.

1. Kneel beside the victim midway between the head and chest.



2. Using the first two fingers of your dominant hand, locate the notch where the lower ribs are attached to the sternum. Place the heel of your other hand on the sternum above your index finger. Place your dominant hand on top of the other.



3. Position your shoulders directly over the hands. Push the weight of your upper body straight down about two inches, fifteen times allowing the chest to return to its original position between each compression without removing your hands.



4. Tilt the head as you would for mouth-to-mouth (see Mouth-to-Mouth Method) and give two slow breaths.



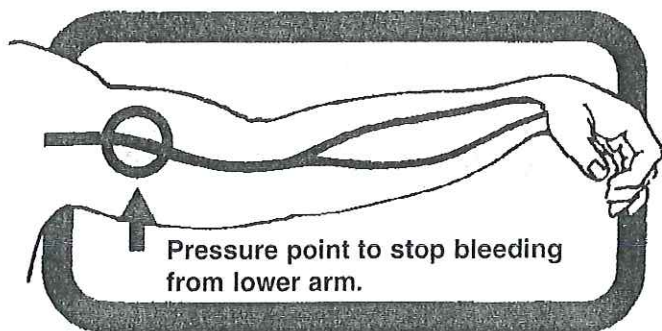
This is considered a full cycle of CPR. Do four full cycles before rechecking the pulse.



5. If after four cycles there is no pulse, continue CPR for another four cycles and recheck pulse. If you find a pulse, check for breathing and administer mouth-to-mouth if necessary.

## Bleeding From Cuts

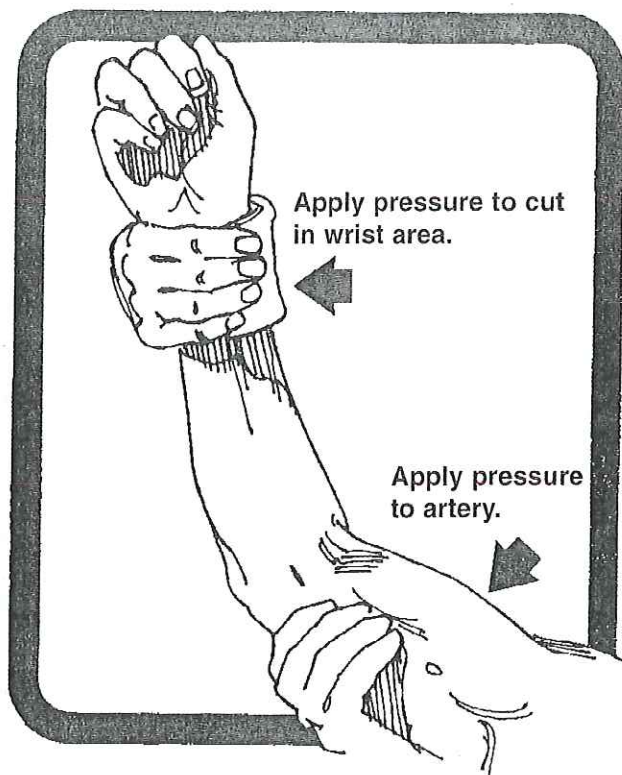
Cuts are the outdoorsman's most common injury. They are usually the result of accidents with tools such as axes, hatchets and knives.



Bleeding from most cuts can be stopped by pressing firmly on the cut with a thick cloth pad.

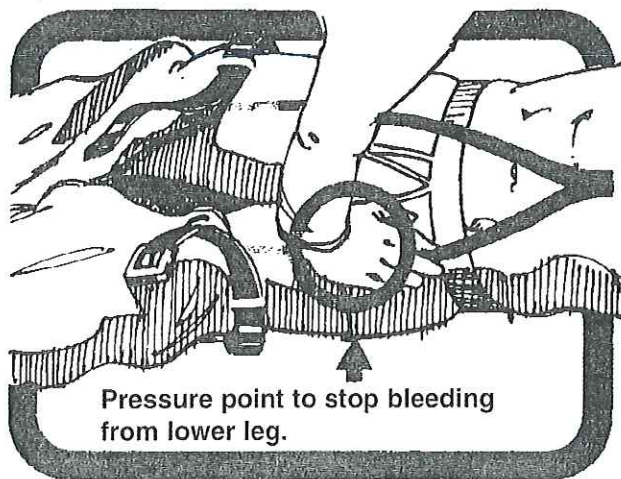
It is vital to stop all bleeding as quickly as possible. Use whatever cloth is handiest - a handkerchief, even a piece of clothing such as an undershirt - if a sterile compress isn't readily available.

Press the pad firmly and directly over the wound and hold it there until the bleeding stops. Keep pressing for at least five minutes. Do not dab at the cut and do not keep looking to see if the bleeding has stopped. If you release the pressure too soon, the bleeding will start again.



If you don't think the wound involves a broken bone, keep it elevated above the level of the heart to help stop the bleeding.

If blood is coming in spurts, it means an artery has been cut. Bleeding from an artery can cause death in just a few minutes if it is not stopped quickly. To stop bleeding from a severed artery, keep pressure directly over the wound and apply additional pressure at pressure points. If the cut is in the lower arm, blood flow can be controlled by applying strong pressure on the inside of the arm, halfway between the elbow and shoulder. If the cut is in the leg, blood flow can be controlled by applying strong pressure in the groin area.





A TOURNIQUET SHOULD BE USED ONLY WHEN BLEEDING IS SO SEVERE THAT THE VICTIM'S LIFE IS ENDANGERED, because the tourniquet could result in the loss of a limb. Never use wire or string to make a tourniquet, use a belt, strips of cloth or a rolled handkerchief. The tourniquet should be tied loosely, as close to the wound as possible and between the wound and the heart.

Insert a stick in the knot of the cloth or belt and twist to tighten the tourniquet. It should be tight enough to stop the bleeding but not so tight that it cuts off blood circulation.

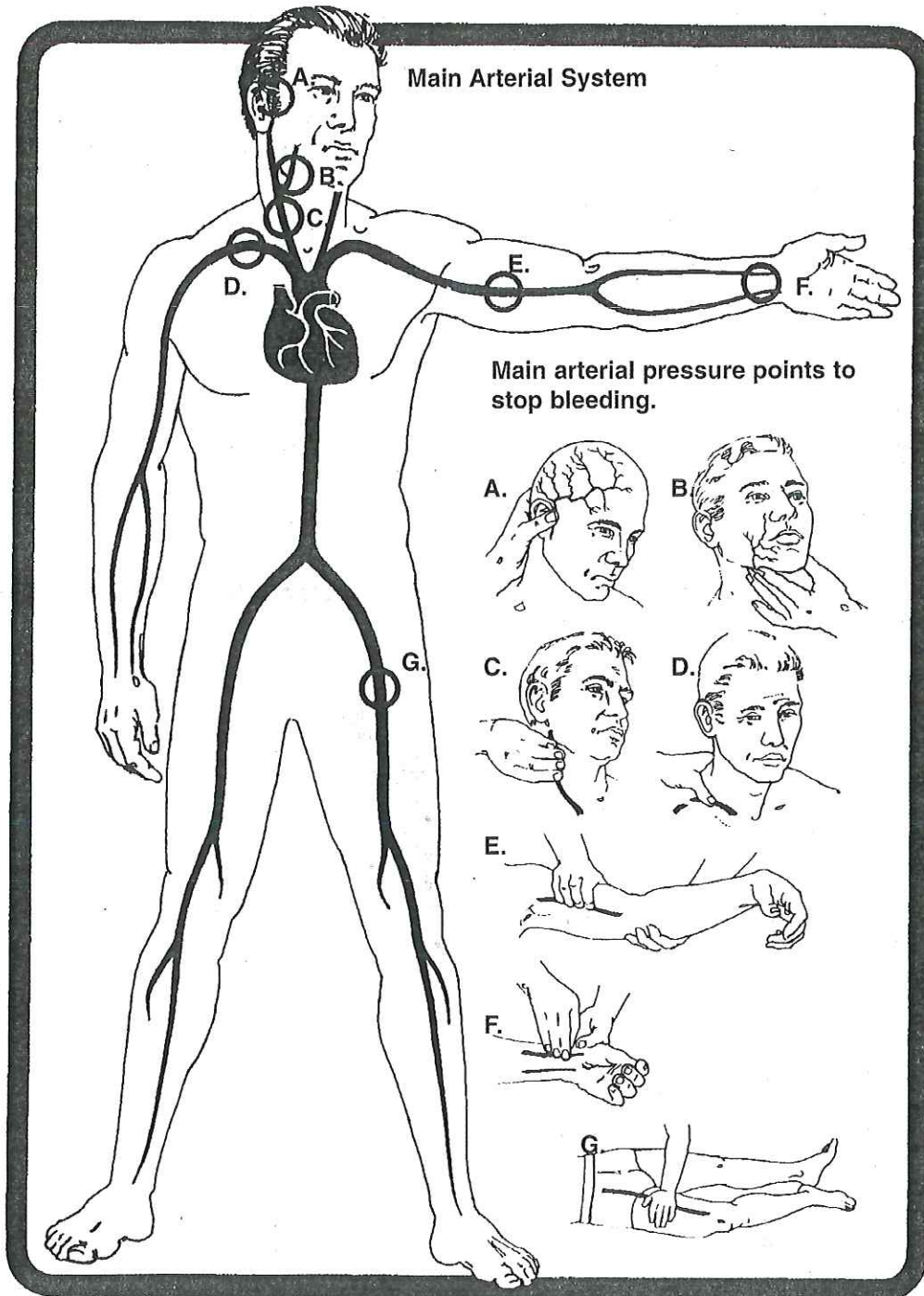
Once the bleeding has stopped, the wound should be

cleaned. Wash the wound with clean water and soap. Be very gentle or the bleeding may start again.

Antiseptics and alcohol should not be used to clean wounds. Although these products do kill germs, they may also destroy tissue which could delay healing.

After the wound has been carefully cleaned, apply a sterile bandage or gauze compress and hold it firmly in place with adhesive tape.

As a precaution against serious infection, anyone planning a hunting or camping trip should receive an anti-tetanus toxin injection before starting out.



# Shock

The victim of any kind of accident or medical emergency will often suffer shock in addition to his injuries. Shock may occur immediately, or it may happen several hours after an accident.

A person in shock is pale, exhibits restlessness or irritability, is perspiring and feels faint. His breathing and pulse will be rapid and weak and his skin will feel cool and damp.

Even when an injury is not extensive, shock can be very serious. No matter what the accident, after immediate first aid has been given, keep the victim lying down even if he doesn't want to. Elevate the legs about twelve inches, unless he has a head, neck, or chest injury. Raise the person's head slightly if there has been an injury in these areas.

Keep the person warm, but not hot. A person in shock loses body heat rapidly, which makes the shock more severe. Cover him with a blanket or coat. If he is on the ground and his injuries permit movement, put a blanket underneath him.

If he is conscious, do not give him anything to drink, even though he may be thirsty.

# Sprains

Next to cuts, sprains are the most common injury suffered by outdoorsmen. Sprains are injuries to ligaments and muscles and the blood vessels around a joint. They almost always occur as a result of excess pull or strain on the supporting ligaments of a joint. If the stress is extreme, ligaments may be torn away from the joint.

Sprains cause swelling, tenderness, and pain if the injured part is moved.

Rest the injured part on a pillow or blanket roll. If the ligaments have been pulled or torn, rest will permit them to strengthen themselves. Keeping the injured limb raised will help to reduce swelling.

A severely sprained wrist or ankle should be treated as if it is fractured - splint the injured part in the position you find it and keep it elevated for 24 hours. Newspapers or magazines rolled tightly will make firm splints for immobilizing a limb.

Apply a cold compress to the sprain. This will reduce the swelling. Continue treating the sprain with cold compresses for several days if necessary until there is no swelling.

# Fractures and Dislocations

A fracture is a broken bone. A dislocation is the displacement of the end of a bone from its joint. Dislocations often have the same symptoms as fractures and should be treated as if they were broken bones.

Only a doctor or qualified medical practitioner should "set" a broken bone. If someone has fractured or dislocated a bone, immobilize the injured area, and guard against further injury while getting him to a hospital or doctor.

There are two kinds of fractures - simple and compound. A simple fracture is also called a closed fracture because the broken bone is under the surface of the skin.

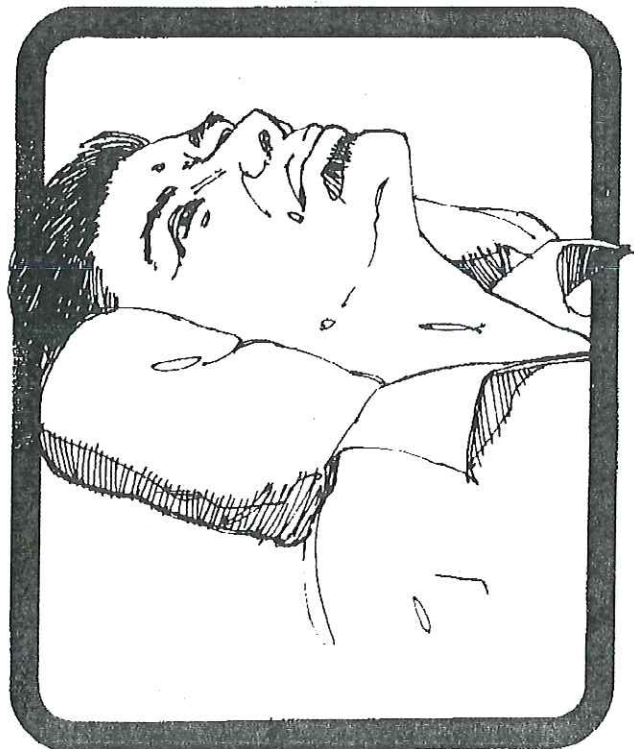
Dislocations are treated like closed fractures. A compound, or open fracture, is when the broken bone cuts through the skin and makes an open wound.

In treating an open fracture, do not push the bone back inside. First, control bleeding by direct pressure.

Give first aid for shock.

# Back Injuries

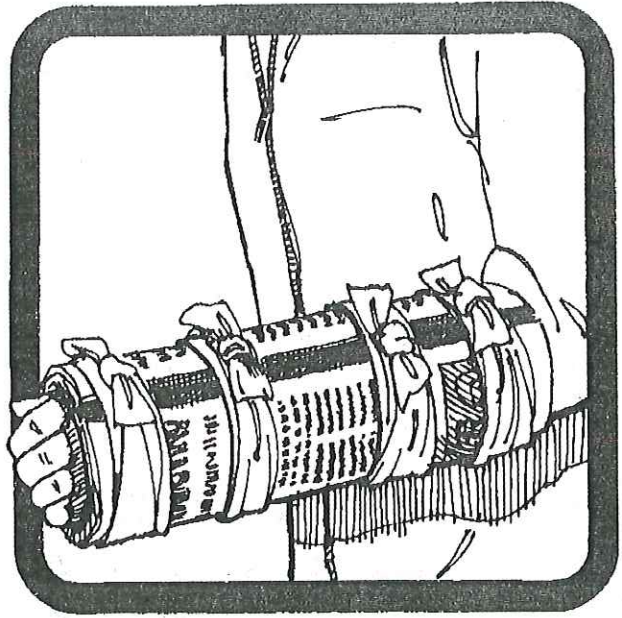
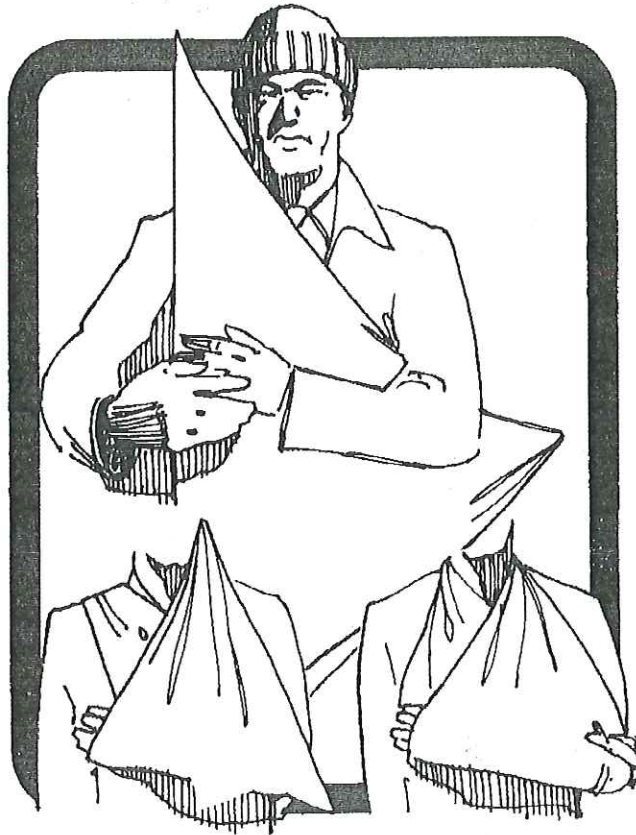
Great care must be taken when moving a person with a suspected back fracture. Use a board as a stretcher. Do not twist or bend the injured person's neck or back, and keep him lying very still while taking him quickly to a hospital.





## Upper Arm Fracture

When there is a fracture of the upper arm, tie splints securely, one on each side of the break. Put padding in the injured person's armpit to make a cushion and prevent chafing. Support the arm with a sling. Then bind the arm to the chest to keep it still.



## Ankle Fracture

Splint the ankle without attempting to change the position of the broken bone. A tightly rolled blanket or pillow can be used to splint a broken ankle. With the injured foot placed on the center of the blanket roll or pillow, bring the roll up each side of the ankle and strip or tie securely.

## Elbow Fracture

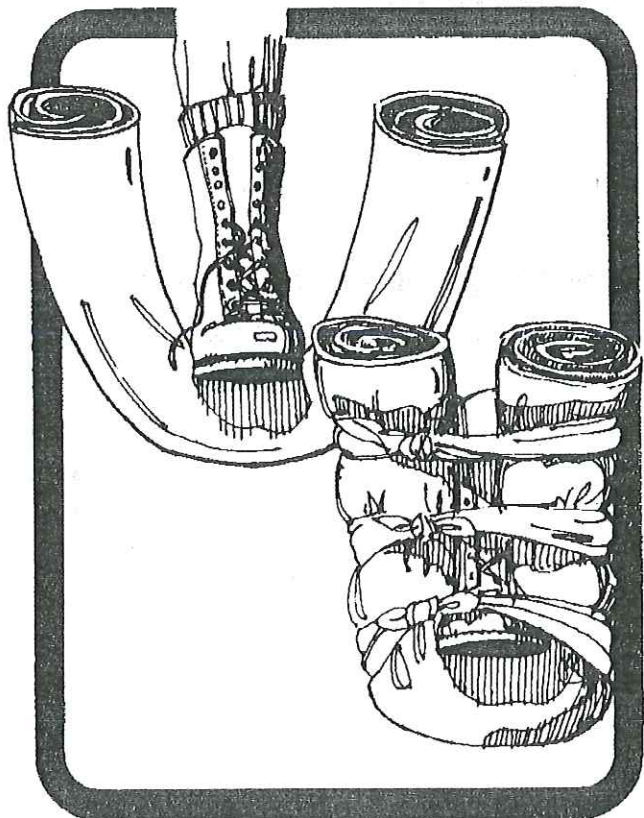
When an elbow is fractured, do not move the joint to a different position. Splint the elbow in the same position it is in after the break. The victim should be treated by a doctor as quickly as possible to prevent damage to the hand and other complications.

## Forearm Fracture

There are two bones in the forearm. Very often, both bones will be broken in an accident. Splint the entire forearm to immobilize the arm.

## Wrist Fracture

A broken wrist is often the result of falling on an out stretched hand. Until the wrist can be properly set, it should be immobilized with splints and kept in an elevated position. After applying a splint, always check the finger tips for feeling, warmth, and color.





## Hip, Pelvis, Thigh and Lower Leg Fractures

Fractures of these bones can be serious and medical attention should be obtained as quickly as possible. Keep the broken ends and the joints around them still and in the position in which they are broken. The victim must be kept still and quiet with the broken bone completely immobile during the trip to the hospital.

## Neck Fracture

The victim must be moved very carefully. Move the head and the body at the same time as one unit. Carry the victim on a firm stretcher, lying on his back with his face up. Place a small support under the neck and padding around the head and neck to prevent motion.



## Jaw Fracture

Loosely wrap a bandage under the chin and over the top of the head. This will keep the lower jaw from dropping. Do not tie the bandage in such a way that the injured person is unable to open his mouth.



## Fractured Ribs

A fractured rib can be dangerous because the broken bone could puncture the lung or some other internal organ.

If a fractured rib has broken through the skin, cover the open wound with a thick sterile compress so that the air cannot enter the chest cavity. The victim should be moved, lying on his back with his head and chest slightly raised.

If the rib has not broken through the skin, bind the victim's arm to his chest on the injured side. This will assist in support of the injured area and ease breathing.

## Concussion

Concussion is the swelling of brain tissue following a severe blow to the head. A person with a head injury should be kept still and encouraged to rest quietly.

He may have a headache and stiff neck accompanied by vomiting and he may not be able to think clearly. The pupils of the eyes may be different in size.

Immediate medical attention is essential if the victim is bleeding from the ears or mouth or if there is a clear, watery fluid coming from the nose or ears. Keep the injured person at rest with his head slightly raised. Give first aid for shock.

## Burns

Do not ignore a burn, even if it is minor. If left untreated, a burn could become infected.

If someone is badly burned you must relieve the pain, prevent infection and treat for shock until you are able to get the victim to a hospital. Shock is the greatest danger after a severe burn.

Do not try to clean a burn or strip away any clothing that is sticking to the burn. Immerse the burned area in cold water. This will relieve pain. If a blister forms, do not break the blister.

Lightly cover the burn with a clean dressing. This will relieve the pain by keeping the air away from the burn. It also reduces the chance of infection. If a very clean dressing is not available, leave the burn uncovered.

Do not use antiseptic or iodine on a burn and never apply grease or butter. If the burn is very minor, burn ointment or Vaseline may be used to relieve the pain on the first day.

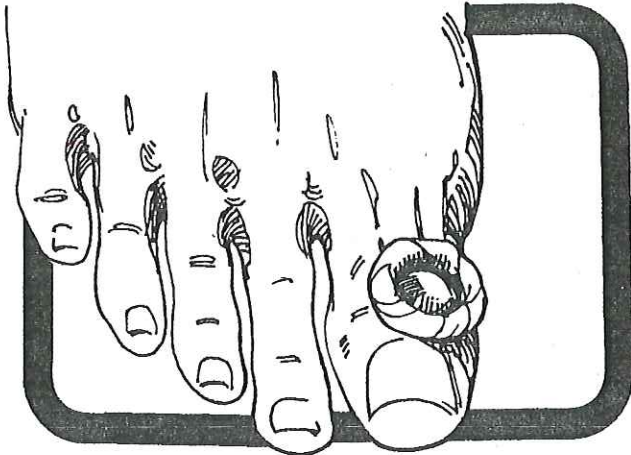
A person exposed to a flash or forest fire may suffer damage to the lungs from breathing in smoke and heat. He should be taken to the hospital as quickly as possible.



# Blisters

Inspect your feet frequently for tender red patches which are the beginnings of blisters. Cover these areas with adhesive tape to protect the skin from being rubbed by your shoe and forming a blister.

Once a blister has formed, make a donut bandage - which is a round pad with the center cut out - to protect the blister.



Do not break blisters. This increases the chance of infection and makes them more painful. Instead, cleanse the area around the edge of the blister and, with a sterilized needle, prick a tiny hole in the side of the swelling. Very gently ease the fluid out through the pinprick. When a blister is empty, cover the area with a sterile dressing or adhesive tape. If tape is applied over the blister, it should remain in place until a new layer of skin has formed.

To relieve pain or inflammation, soak the blister area in hot water for 20 to 30 minutes, three or four times daily. After each soaking, cover the tender area with a sterile dressing.

The ragged dead skin of a broken blister should be trimmed carefully to prevent damaging new tissue, but should not be completely removed until the new skin has formed and toughened.

## Frostbite

Frostbite is the freezing of a part of the body; most often the nose, ears, cheeks, fingers, or toes.

When frostbite occurs, the skin is first flushed, then changes to a shiny white or grayish-yellow. Occasionally there is pain with frostbite, but usually the affected areas are numb.

If you suffer frostbite, do not rub the frozen part. Warm frostbitten skin by putting the affected area against a warm part of your body - cup your hand over a frostbitten ear, warm frostbitten fingers under your armpit.

As soon as you are indoors, immerse the frozen part in lukewarm, body-temperature water. Do not use hot water.

After thawing, cover the affected part with dry, sterile dressing. Drink hot nourishing liquids such as soup and hot chocolate.

After the skin thaws, do not allow it to become frostbitten again soon afterward. Refreezing will kill skin tissue.

A hunter whose feet are frozen would be better to walk for help on frozen feet than to thaw his feet and proceed later, taking a chance on having his feet freeze a second time.

## Bites

### Animal Bites

If you are bitten by an animal, wash the wound with soap and water. Cleanse throughout to prevent infection. Use firm pressure with a clean cloth to stop bleeding. Have a doctor examine the wound as soon as possible.

Wild animals can carry rabies which can be fatal to humans unless treatment is started as soon as possible.

Animal bites may also cause tetanus in a person who has not been immunized against this infectious, sometimes fatal disease. To guard against tetanus, an anti-tetanus inoculation is recommended before taking an extended hunting trip into remote country.

### Insect Bites

Ticks burrow into the skin. Pulling them off often leaves their heads beneath the skin, later causing infection. Dabbing ticks with Vaseline, kerosene or gasoline, or bringing the tip of a hot stick near the insects will make them let go.

### Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is transmitted by the bite of an infected tick. The most common carrier of lyme disease is the deer tick. Although the nymph is very small (about the size of the head of a pin) the adult can grow to the size of a grape seed.

The first sign of infection is the "bull's-eye" rash (named so because of its lighter center and raised red outer edges) which is usually about 7 inches in diameter. Other signals include fever, muscle ache, headache, and overall weakness. As lyme disease worsens, it can cause numbness, memory loss, arthritis, high fever, and problems with seeing and hearing. After removing any tick, wash the area at once with soap and water. Apply antibiotic ointment to prevent infection. Continue to monitor the site periodically for several days.



## Spider Bites

Spider bites can cause swelling and redness. Cold compresses applied to the bite will reduce swelling. After a spider bite, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

## Insect Stings

Bee and wasp stings can be very serious. If a person is stung by many bees or wasps, he may become quite ill. Some people are allergic to bee or wasp venom and will have severe reactions if stung. Multiple stings or allergies may cause a person to have difficulty breathing, go into shock and unconsciousness.

If stung, remove the stinger by scraping it away with a credit card or pull it out using tweezers. Cold compresses will reduce swelling and a paste made of starch or calamine lotion will lessen the itching.

## Snake Bites

Of the 8,000 annual reported cases of snake bites in the United States, fewer than 12 result in death. Care for a snake bite victim by washing the wound and immobilizing the injured area. Keep the area lower than the heart and do not apply ice or a tourniquet. Do not use electric shock and do not cut the wound. Instead seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If you will be more than 30 minutes away from medical care

and are at risk of snake bites, always carry a snake bite kit. Before leaving your home, familiarize yourself with the kit and know how to use its contents.

## First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is an essential part of every hunter's gear. The hunter should never go into the field without a first aid kit. The kit should contain basic, effective first aid items and the hunter should be completely familiar with and know how to use its contents. A first aid manual should be part of the kit. Size and shape of the kit will depend on how the kit will be carried - backpack, jacket, pocket, belt.

### Essential Items Include:

- First aid handbook
- Band-Aids - approximately 6-12
- 4 x 4 inch (10 cm x 10 cm) sterile bandage
- Roll of gauze bandage - 1 inch (2.5 cm)
- Adhesive tape - ½ inch x 5 yards (1 cm x 1.5 m)
- Petroleum gel
- Antiseptic
- Razor blade
- Small scissors
- Tweezers
- Small mirror
- Disposable gloves
- Wet nap
- Cold pack
- Aspirin





Your family doctor may suggest that some special drugs be included in your first aid kit.

Tape around the rim of the first aid kit's container. This will keep the kit water tight and, although the tape is not sterile, it may be useful if extra tape is needed for any purpose.

Your first aid kit, like your survival kit, should be completely familiar to you. Know what it contains and how to use each item properly.

Learn enough basic first aid so that you can help yourself and your companions should an emergency occur.

## Responsibilities After First Aid

After first aid treatment has been given, other actions may need to be considered.

### Moving the Injured Person

Give careful thought to:

1. Nature of injury
2. Distance from help
3. Discomfort and complications associated with the injury
4. Type of terrain
5. Weather conditions
6. Time of day
7. Is medical help available at destination

### Leaving Victims To Go For Help

Consider the following:

1. State of mind (Is the victim capable of staying alone?)
2. Is casualty out of shock?
3. Weather conditions (Will the injured person be comfortable while you are away? Is he sheltered from sudden storms?)

## Areas of Concern for Yourself

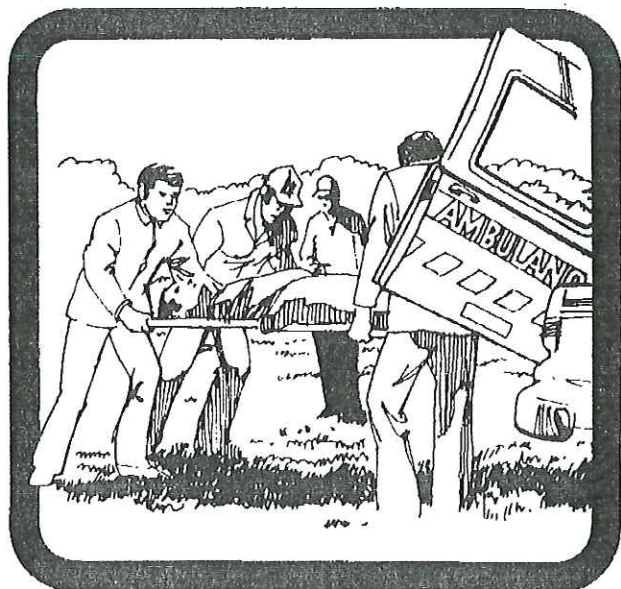
1. Do you know your destination and route thoroughly?
2. Are you mentally and physically capable of arriving at destination in the time you plan?
3. Should the weather change for the worse, will you still be able to reach help?
4. Be certain you can direct help to the exact location of injured person.

Consider these points carefully before you take action and always keep in mind that it is your responsibility to try and save a life without endangering yourself or others.

## Preparing Yourself to Provide First Aid for Field Emergencies

Proper training is the best way to prepare yourself to aid someone who is injured or becomes ill while they are in the field. First aid is easily and quickly learned from a qualified instructor. With the knowledge and practice gained from a course in first aid and the contents of a properly equipped first aid kit, you will be ready to handle minor mishaps and injuries. You will also be able to give life preserving assistance in the event of a more serious injury.

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) techniques are best learned in a formal course of instructions and practice given by a certified teacher. Such training can be called on in dealing with breathing or cardiac emergencies. Training in first aid and CPR is readily available in most localities through classes sponsored as a public service by local Red Cross units, sportsmen's clubs or various other community organizations. For your own well being and that of your companions', you should enroll in a first aid and CPR training course and periodically update your knowledge. This is the easiest and surest way to be prepared to handle emergencies in the field.





## Notes

